



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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Frank Kenney 202/343-5634
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1982-83 WATERFOWL HUNTING SEASON FRAMEWORKS PROPOSED

Waterfowl hunting season frameworks proposed for 1982-83 in the Federal Register by the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are generally the same as last year.

Nationwide:

- Stabilizing duck season lengths and limits. The Service proposes to retain essentially the same duck season lengths and limits this fall as the past two years as part of a five-year cooperative study with Canada to determine how hunting regulations, duck harvests, and duck populations interrelate. By stabilizing major duck hunting regulations, waterfowl managers will be better able to evaluate the effects of factors such as habitat conditions, production, disease, and natural mortality upon harvests and the populations of ducks. An environmental assessment that describes the proposal was issued by the Service in August 1980.

Atlantic Flyway:

- Canada goose season in the Carolinas. The Canada goose season framework for North Carolina and South Carolina is shortened and delayed to December 20, 1982, through January 31, 1983, in order to confine hunting to the time when the influx of northern geese is most likely to occur.

Mississippi Flyway:

- Mississippi Valley population of Canada geese. In order to reverse the downward trend of these geese, a number of hunting restrictions are being proposed. These include reducing the season length to 30 days in portions of Wisconsin, and to 40 days throughout the remaining range of these geese; reducing the harvest quotas to 18,000 (from 20,000 in 1981) in Wisconsin and 27,000 (from 30,000 in 1981) in Illinois; altering the reallocation of the Illinois Canada goose quota; and increasing the area in western Kentucky where the 40-day season will apply. Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee are provided the option to establish Canada goose hunting seasons.

- Waterfowl season frameworks. An extension of the goose season framework to February 15 is proposed in the Southeastern Canada Goose Management Area of Michigan to further alleviate goose nuisance problems. Wisconsin is allowed an October 1 framework opening date for the waterfowl season.

(over)

- Zoning. Michigan may modify its duck zone boundary to alleviate a local enforcement problem. Illinois may establish a zone in three central counties to allow the harvest of local giant Canada geese.

- Definition of "geese." For regulatory purposes, brant are defined as "geese." This will enable hunters to harvest brant which occasionally appear in the Mississippi Flyway.

Central Flyway:

- Definition of "geese." For purposes of hunting regulations, brant are included within the definition of "geese" in order to permit the taking of brant which occasionally occur in the flyway.

- New Mexico goose framework. The goose framework for New Mexico is altered to provide for separate seasons on "light" and "dark" geese, as is allowed in other portions of the flyway.

- Zoning for duck hunting. New duck hunting zones are proposed for Montana, New Mexico, and Oklahoma, and a modification is made in the Nebraska zones.

Pacific Flyway:

- Goose framework changes. Minor changes are proposed for the goose season frameworks in Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Utah so that the goose hunting seasons may coincide with the duck hunting seasons. Portions of Coos, Curry, and Tillamook Counties of Oregon are closed to all Canada goose hunting in order to protect Aleutian Canada geese which have been found to winter there.

- Whistling swan frameworks. Minor changes will provide more flexibility to State conservation agencies in issuing permits and tags, and monitoring the harvest of whistling swans.

The Service's proposed frameworks for migratory waterfowl hunting were published in the August 20, 1982, Federal Register. Comments on the proposed frameworks will be accepted by the Service until August 30, 1982. Such comments should be addressed to the Director (FWS/MBMO), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

Final hunting season framework regulations will be published in the Federal Register after the public comment period ends and after the States review and comment on the current proposals. State conservation agency authorities select their regulations from those offered in the final Federal frameworks.

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